

# PRESS RELEASE

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## For Immediate Release

November 28, 2005

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Madison, Wisconsin -- Stephen P. Sinnott, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Gregorio M. Acosta, Jr., DOB: 5/25/78, formerly a resident of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, pleaded guilty today in U.S. District Court in Madison to a charge that he conspired with other members of the Latin King Nation to distribute cocaine and crack cocaine. The guilty plea was accepted by Chief U.S. District Judge Barbara B. Crabb and sentencing was scheduled for February 14, 2006, at 1:20 p.m. Acosta, Jr. faces a mandatory minimum penalty of 10 years in prison and a maximum penalty of life in prison.

The proof at the guilty plea hearing established that Acosta, Jr., a member of the Milwaukee Latin Kings, traveled to the Lac Courte Oreilles Reservation (LCO) in Sawyer County, Wisconsin, beginning in approximately August 1999. He met Spring Lasieur, a Latin Queen from the LCO Latin Kings. From August 1999 until early 2000, he, Ms. Lasieur, and co-conspirator Ernesto Estrada III, traveled to Milwaukee several times a week and returned to LCO with crack and powder cocaine for redistribution. Acosta, Jr. married Spring Lasieur in December 2000, moved to LCO, and continued traveling to Milwaukee and returning to LCO with cocaine and crack cocaine for redistribution until the fall of 2003.

Thirty-five defendants have already been sentenced in this long-term investigation being conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Wisconsin Department of Justice, Division of Criminal Investigation-Narcotics Bureau, and the Sawyer County Sheriff's Department.

In addition to Acosta, Jr., Robert G. Smith, and Donald Fairbanks have pleaded guilty and are awaiting sentencing. A trial of six remaining defendants is scheduled to begin in federal court in Madison on December 5, 2005.

The prosecution of these cases has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney John W. Vaudreuil.

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